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FREDERIC and PHARAMOND,
OR THE
CONSOLATIONS
OF
HUMAN LIFE.

By JOHN LANGHORNE, D.D.

*Contra Fortunam tolleres animos, et omnia tela
sua, non tanquam possent venire, sed tanquam
utique essent ventura prospiceres.* SEN. Ep.

L O N D O N,

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FREDERICK AND PHARMACONS

CONSOLATIONS



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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Reflections contained in the following Sheets were intended for the private Use of a Friend under Affliction ; but the Author had not proceeded far with them, before a severe Event of the same Kind rendered it necessary for him to call Home the Precepts for the Support of his own Mind. It would be happy if he could recommend their Efficacy on Experience. All he can say in their Favour, with regard to himself, is, that the writing of them helped him to forget his Sorrows.

All he can presume to hope for others, is, that they may find the same Advantage while they read them. — Yet this is no very idle Apology: For he who has by any Means removed the Idea of Misery, though it were but for a Moment, has not laboured in vain.

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CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE I.



ON.
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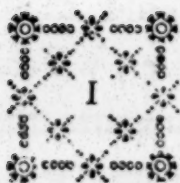


CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE I.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

FREDERIC.



HAVE suffered so much,
and enjoyed so little, that
I wanted the Consolations
you speak of; but for
you, my PHARAMOND, I hope Pro-
vidence has a better Fate, and that

B 2

the

the Art of bearing Evils is the last thing you need learn.

PHARAMOND.

Whatever you may have the Goodness to hope for me, you would not have me forget that I am a Man.—You are incapable of such Kindness—It is from your Experience in Adversity that I promise myself Instruction—You have borne, with so much Firmness, such a Variety of Afflictions, that one would think you possessed of some Secret, which, in a peculiar Manner, supports the Soul upon the most trying Occasions—I know you too well to suspect you of Insensibility.

F R E-

DISCOURSE I. 5

FREDERIC.

Indeed, you ought not : I love my Friends, and take a Pleasure in their Happiness: I agree with you, too, that it is a right Rule to avail ourselves of the Experience and the Conduct of others. It is, undoubtedly, the shortest and the easiest Way to Wisdom : But yet one may possibly be misled by it. The Events of Life, and the Dispositions of Men, are so various, that the Conduct of one Man may neither be practicable nor applicable to another, in Circumstances apparently similar.

6 DISCOURSE I.

PHARAMOND.

This requires Explanation.

FREDERIC.

You will find it, if you look upon Misfortunes in general. Their Size is not to be estimated from their Quality, but from the Temper and Understanding of the Person who suffers them. AMYNTOR, you know, who is lately dead, was equally the Friend of THERON and of AURELIUS. He was the Patron of both, likewise; and both were entirely dependent on his Bounty. The Loss they sustained, therefore, was the same, but not so the Misfortune.

AURELIUS

DISCOURSE I. 7

AURELIUS is a Man of keen Sensibility and Care; THERON is remarkable for an obstinate Fortitude and Negligence—I am sorry for THERON; but I grieve for AURELIUS—I pity him at my Soul—He seems to have received a Death-wound from the same Blow that hardly staggered the other. The Conduct of THERON cannot be recommended to him. His Misfortune is not the same; and his Consolations must be different.

PHARAMOND.

I see the Truth of this: But are there not general Consolations applicable to all Persons under Af-

B 4 fiction;

8 DISCOURSE I.

fiction; I mean all that have Sensibility, supposing such only to be capable of Affliction?

FREDERICK

Undoubtedly: There are common Sources of Comfort, to which all may have Recourse, and from which all must principally derive their Satisfaction; but the general Medicines of the Mind, like those of the Body, will depend chiefly, for Success, on the Skill with which they are administered. Our Consolations, in general, are to be found in Religion and Philosophy; yet both may be perverted in the Application; and from those salutary Springs
may

DISCOURSE I. 9

may be drawn the most fatal Poisons.

PHARAMOND.

Is it possible, then? Can any thing destructive proceed from what is Divine? The Author of our Religion has left it on Record, that a good Tree must bring forth good Fruit: If the System He hath established be a good one, how should it be productive of Evil?

FREDERIC.

Excuse me: I ought to have made a Distinction. It is not from Religion or Philosophy that Men derive Folly and Wretchedness, instead of Wisdom and Consolation. It is from

Fana-

10 DISCOURSE I.

Fanaticism and Sophistry, which their Professors have had the Impudence to call by the Names of Religion and Philosophy.

PHARAMOND.

I have no clear Idea of Fanaticism: Pray tell me what it is.

FREDERIC.

It is more easy to say what it is not. It is no Part of right Religion, because that is a sober and consistent thing; and the invariable Characteristics of Fanaticism are Inconsistency and Extravagance. It has still less to do with Morality, which it avowedly depreciates or
con-

DISCOURSE I. 11

condemns. It has no more Affinity with true Devotion, than Insanity has with Reason. It is an undue Influence of the Imagination in Matters of Religion; but it is not limited to particular Principles, or Forms. It varies its Shape as often as VERTUMNUS, and, like him too, it generally ends in the old Woman——

—— *positis ad Tempora Canis,
Adsimulavit Anum; cultosque intravit
in Hortos.*

PHARAMOND.

I think *Ovid* has represented the God you speak of as most successful under that Shape.

F R E-

FREDERIC.

The same may be said of Fana-
ticism. But we are now enquiring
what are the rational Consolations
of Religion—These arise first and
principally from the Idea it gives
us of the Supreme Being. From the
Revelation of the New Testament,
which is and ought to be, exclu-
sively, our Guide, we are taught
to look upon Him in the Capacity
of a benevolent and affectionate Pa-
rent: We are instructed to address
Him as such in our Prayers; and
when we call upon Him, we are
commanded to call Him OUR
FATHER. This paternal Cha-
racter

DISCOURSE I. 13

Character is intended to give us the most intelligible Idea, we are capable of entertaining, concerning his Disposition towards us. The Properties of a virtuous Father occur to us. We find them to be Consideration, Affection, and Vigilance. The End of these Qualities is our Preservation and Happiness. We apply these Principles, in their utmost Excellence, to our Supreme Parent. The Qualities, which in Man, we admire, under all the Infirmities of his Nature, we ascribe to God, in a Degree adequate to his Perfection.

PHARA-

14 DISCOURSE I.

PHARAMOND.

This seems reasonable; but what Consolations would you derive from hence?

FREDERIC.

The greatest of which the Nature and the Mind of Man are capable. When I find myself under the Patronage and Tuition of a Being that is infinitely powerful; when I reflect that He is concerned for my Preservation and Happiness, much more than the most tender and most vigilant of earthly Parents can be for their Children, I feel a Confidence and Security that entirely possess my Soul. My Heart standeth so fast
that

DISCOURSE I. 15

that it cannot shrink. I smile at the Appearance of Danger, Distress, and Pain; as a Shepherd, who is sheltered under a Rock, beholds with Indifference an approaching Storm. God is my Father, and GOD IS LOVE. I am secure in his Affection. He created me with no other Design than to make me happy, and his Intentions cannot be vain.

PHARAMOND.

He created you with a Design to make you happy, and yet He permits you to be miserable—How is that consistent with the paternal Character you ascribe to Him? Surely, if He has the Affection, He
seems

16 DISCOURSE I.

seems to want the Vigilance you speak of.

FREDERIC.

From a false Conclusion you have drawn a false Inference—You say that Providence permits me to be miserable, and from hence you arraign his paternal Character—Is it necessary for me to repeat, what I told you before, that the Sense of that paternal Character preserves me from Misery. If I were miserable, your Argument might at least have my Folly to support it, but, as I am not, it falls to the Ground.

PHA-

DISCOURSE I. 17

PHARAMOND.

Yet there are others who are miserable ; and they, too, have the same immortal Being for their Father.

FREDERIC.

No : God is not the Father of the Miserable.

PHARAMOND.

You alarm me : He is an Enemy to Sin ; but I never understood that he was the Foe of Misery.

FREDERIC.

God is not, in effect, the Father of the Miserable ; because they do not look upon, or consider him in

C

that

18 DISCOURSE I.

that Capacity. It is impossible that any one, who rightly reflects on the paternal Capacity of God, should be miserable.

PHARAMOND.

Are Pain and Poverty, then, no Evils?

FREDERIC.

They are such only to those who take not God for their Father.

PHARAMOND.

But you allow, that those who do, may, nevertheless, be in Poverty and Pain.

FRE-

DISCOURSE I. 19

FREDERIC.

I allow it.

PHARAMOND.

Of what Consequence is it, then, whether they look upon God in the paternal Capacity, or not; since they are equally exposed to Poverty and Pain in either Circumstance?

FREDERIC.

It is of the greatest Consequence.

PHARAMOND.

I own I have my Doubts—I am impatient till they are removed.

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20 DISCOURSE I.

FREDERIC.

You will acknowlege, that Good and Evil borrow their chief Importance from the Opinions we entertain of them.

PHARAMOND.

I acknowlege it —

FREDERIC.

That those things cannot possibly be Blessings, which we do not believe and embrace as such; and that, on the other hand, those are really no Evils, which we do not estimate in that Light.

PH A-

DISCOURSE I. 21

PHARAMOND.

All this is certain.

FREDERIC.

Now, if we really look upon God in the Character of a Father, though those things which are called Evils may happen to us, we shall not think them such.

PHARAMOND.

I cannot enter into that Distinction; for, though I should both call God my Father, and repose in him the most filial Confidence, yet, if I suffered the Distresses of Pain, or Poverty, I do not see how it would

22 DISCOURSE I.

be possible for me not to think them
Evils.

FREDERIC.

If you should look upon God in
the Capacity of a Parent, would you
not ascribe to him the Properties of
a good Parent ?

PHARAMOND.

Certainly.

FREDERIC.

Is it not the Property of a good
Parent to prevent every thing that
is really pernicious from happening
to his Children, if it be in his Power
to prevent it ?

PHA-

DISCOURSE I. 23

PHARAMOND.

Without doubt.

FREDERIC.

Is it not in the Power of God
to prevent every thing that is *really*
pernicious from happening to us?

PHARAMOND.

It is not to be denied.

FREDERIC.

You have granted, then, that
God is your Father; that of course
he must be a good Father; that it
is the Property of a good Father
to prevent every thing that is really
evil from happening to his Children,

24 DISCOURSE I.

if it be in his Power; that this must always be in the Power of God—

PHARAMOND.

It seems, that I have made all these Concessions; and I now apprehend what you would infer from them—

FREDERIC.

This obvious Conclusion; that God being our Father, and being good and powerful, will not permit any *real* Evil to happen to his Children.

PH A-

DISCOURSE I. 25

PHARAMOND.

I cannot object to any thing of this: I would rather persuade myself that it is so.

FREDERIC.

Yes, my PHARAMOND, this is the great Fortrefs, the strongest Redoubt of the Soul. While I am confident that the paternal Care and Affection of the Supreme Providence will suffer no *real* Evil to befall me, I cannot consider any thing that happens to me, under that Denomination, as such; and thus I rest satisfied upon this simple Principle.

PHA-

26 DISCOURSE I.

PHARAMOND.

That Satisfaction is, indeed, to be envied; but the Principle, I fear, is hard to be acquired; since, if one may judge from Appearances, it is far from being prevalent in the World.

FREDERIC.

'Tis an obvious, and a melancholy Truth: And yet the little Regard this Principle has paid to it, is not owing to the Difficulty with which it is to be acquired; for when once the Existence of a creating God is allowed, the Providence of a preserving God cannot easily be disallowed.

PHA-

DISCOURSE I. 27

PHARAMOND.

In what Respect does the Belief of the latter depend upon the Admission of the former?

FREDERIC.

You allow that a Being of infinite Power and Intelligence, whom we call God, created the Universe.

PHARAMOND.

This I believe, because in the several Parts of it I observe a rational and skilful Design.

FREDERIC.

And do not you believe, too, that the same Order and Conformation

28 DISCOURSE I.

mation has been preserved in the several Parts of the Universe, from its Creation till the present Time?

PHARAMOND.

I must believe it; because from what I conceive of the Connection and mutual Dependency of those Parts, I apprehend that if any considerable Variation, either in the Disposition, or in the specific Gravity of one of them had taken Place, the whole System must have been affected by it.

FREDERIC.

You judge rightly. But is not Matter itself, and, consequently, all Things

DISCOURSE I. 29

Things that are composed of it, subject
to Variation and Decay?

PHARAMOND.

So it seems.

FREDERIC.

Therefore as the same exact Pro-
portion and Disposition of Parts,
which were necessary in the Forma-
tion of the Universe, must as ne-
cessarily be continued for its Prefer-
vation; and as every thing that
is composed of Matter is liable
to Variation and Decay, is it not
evident that the same Power and
Skill which were exerted to create,
must

30 DISCOURSE I.

must be employed to preserve this System?

PHARAMOND.

I shall make no Difficulty of granting this.

FREDERIC.

However, I will beg no Concessions; nor shall you give me any Credit upon supposed Principles. Your own Reason convinces you, that the Creator of the Universe must be a Being of infinite Wisdom.

PHARAMOND.

Nothing more certain!

F R E-

DISCOURSE I. 31

FREDERIC.

And is it not the Property of Wisdom to propose some End in every thing that it does?

PHARAMOND.

No doubt of it.

FREDERIC.

The Supreme Wisdom, then, by which this System of the Universe was framed, must still have a *Regard to the End* for which it was created.

PHARAMOND.

Of course it must be so.

FRE-

FREDERIC.

And what is that *Regard to the End* but a *providential Attention*—a constant Care and Vigilance, that the several Parts and Members of the Creation perform the Offices assigned them?

PHARAMOND.

I allow you this—But may not the Creator have made his Work so perfect that it should no further require his Care?

FREDERIC.

If we may judge from the visible Objects of this lower World, (and I think we ought to judge from what

DISCOURSE I. 33

what we see) that does not appear to have been the Scheme of his Providence.

PHARAMOND.

Can any Reason be given why it should not ?

FREDERIC.

As good a Reason may be given for that, as can be given for his creating the Universe at all.

PHARAMOND.

What is that, then ?

FREDERIC.

The Pleasure of exercising his Benevolence.

D

PHA-

PHARAMOND.

That Argument is somewhat hard to digest — that God should create an imperfect System, or even make any particular Members of that System imperfect, for the sake of exercising his Benevolence!

FREDERIC.

Only allow the Position, and be not disturbed about the Argument. I mean not to assert that the Pleasure of exercising his Benevolence was the Reason why God made imperfect Creatures: Though that appears to be the only Reason why He made any Creatures at all, and might partially, too, be assigned

as

DISCOURSE I. 35

as a Cause of admitting Imperfection in his Works, since thus it would afford Him more frequent Opportunities of interposing his providential Kindness — Had this System been created perfect, what Occasion for his Eye, or his tender Mercies to be over all his Works? Every thing would have hastened to its Destination, without Impediment or Error — The great Work of the Creator would no longer have been an Object for the Agency of his Powers, and, like the Disciples of EPICURUS, we might have imagined Him to repose in an ungodlike Indolence.

36 DISCOURSE I.

PHARAMOND.

All this may be granted; and yet, methinks, I should not have been satisfied, had you urged it as the principal Cause why the Creator admitted Imperfection into his Work— This Question would still have had Weight with me; “ If God is so benevolent a Being as He is represented, would it not have been more consistent with his Goodness to have exempted his Creatures from Evil entirely, by giving them an original Perfection, than to have exposed them to Suffering through the Imperfection of their Nature, merely for the Exercise of his interposing Providence ? ”

F R E-

DISCOURSE I. 37

FREDERIC.

Yet, supposing it were so, PHARAMOND, should you be unwilling to hold an imperfect Being upon such Terms? Should you think it hard that the Life, which was given you, had still some need of the Giver's Care? Would not that have the Appearance either of Pride or Ingratitude, either of an Ambition to be independent of the Giver, or of a Dissatisfaction at the little Value of the Gift? Would you refuse a pleasing or useful Piece of Machinery, because it might be necessary for the Artist who made it, at Times, to rectify its Motion?

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PHA-

38 DISCOURSE I.

PHARAMOND.

I did not expect such Questions as these! Is not all this beside the Purpose? It was what God might have done for Man, and not what Man might have accepted from God, that was the Subject of my Observation.

FREDERIC.

I remember it well — And yet the Questions I have raised upon it are more to the Purpose, perhaps, than you will allow them to be. When the Question is, “Why has not God done more for Man? “Why has he left him so imperfect a Being?” it is surely of Consequence

DISCOURSE I. 39

sequence to ask whether the Gift of human Life, under the Superintendency of Providence, is not an acceptable Gift—If it should be allowed to be so, the Divine Goodness can never be arraigned for withholding superior Privileges, since, in that Case, Man might continue to murmur that God had not communicated to him his own Perfections.

PHARAMOND.

It is upon this, then, that you rest the Argument, that human Life, with all its Imperfections, is a valuable Gift, and consequently the

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Pos-

40 DISCOURSE I.

Possessor has no right to complain. —

FREDERIC.

No, my PHARAMOND, a little further Indulgence — Though I perceive that your Answer is ready — You are impatient to tell me this does not preclude your Question — How is it consistent with the Divine Goodness to admit Imperfection, and its Consequence, Evil? This, you would say, is what I ask, and I am yet to be answered.

PHARAMOND.

You have spoken for me.

FRE-

DISCOURSE I. 41

FREDERIC.

As an Advocate on the part of the Supreme Being, I needed not, indeed, have sought the Aid of collateral Arguments—I might have come to the Point at once, and asserted both the Wisdom and the Goodness of Providence in the Admission of Imperfection, by shewing you that, without it, there could have been no such thing as Virtue.

PHARAMOND.

How should a State of Imperfection be necessary to the Existence of Virtue?

FRE-

42 DISCOURSE I.

FREDERIC.

Because Virtue depends upon the Possibility of acting wrong. Had Man been created perfect, he could not have erred; he could not have acted wrong—Now if he could not have acted wrong, he would have had no Merit in acting right; and the Merit of acting right is Virtue.

PHARAMOND.

Well, that, I think, is sufficiently clear. Yet some, perhaps, might doubt whether the Existence of Virtue itself were an Equivalent for the Admission of Imperfection, and its Consequence, Evil.

F R E-

DISCOURSE I. 43

FREDERIC.

To cut off that Doubt, the readiest Way is to weigh the Advantages of the former against the Disadvantages of the latter. If Virtue and its Rewards will not more than counterbalance Imperfection and its Evils, the Argument in its Favour must be given up.

PHARAMOND.

A Comparison of this Nature is, with respect to myself, unnecessary, because I scruple not to take the immortal Rewards of Virtue into the Question.

F R E-

44 DISCOURSE I.

FREDERIC.

Acknowledge but that, and every Point is gained, with Regard to the Consolations arising from Religion ; in Favour of which the Argument appears to stand thus—The World was created by the Wisdom of God ; it is the Property of Wisdom to do every thing for some good End ; the Accomplishment of this End requires the Agency of his Providence ; that Agency must be extended to his Creatures ; Man, amongst the rest, must be the Object of it. Agreeably to these Deductions of Reason, he is instructed, by divine Revelation, to look upon God in the Capacity of a Father, and,

DISCOURSE I. 45

and, by the further Light of Reason, he is taught to expect from him all that can be done by the most perfect and most powerful of Parents for the Happiness of his Offspring. If, therefore, he suffers what is called Evil in the World, he does not consider it in that Light, because he knows it must be permitted by his providential Father, and that, as he could have no other End than his Happiness in View, he would permit nothing that should be inconsistent with that End.

PHARAMOND.

I am perfectly satisfied with this Account of the Consolations that arise from Religion; but —

FRE-

46 DISCOURSE I.

FREDERIC.

But, what? my PHARAMOND!
 Surely, if you are satisfied, no further Objections can remain. Pardon me for interrupting you. — I own I am mortified, if a bare Satisfaction with the Argument is all you can acknowledge. — How ill must I have defended the best of Causes! What an unanimating Advocate for the most important, the most interesting of Truths! — You are satisfied, my Friend; but does not the Conclusion bring something more than Satisfaction along with it? — Do you feel no fresh Support within? No elevating Confidence? Is it possible, that you can look upon the Divine
 Being

DISCOURSE I. 47

Being in the Capacity wherein we have now considered him, without some new Complacency, some Confirmation of Heart, that you did not feel before?—The Son, the Care, the Object of everlasting Kindness, and unbounded Power,—Rejoice, my PHARAMOND, rejoice in your Existence!—It is good in itself, and it will infallibly lead to something better.

PHARAMOND.

I partake most cordially in these animating Sentiments, nor did any farther Objections occur to me. I was going to remind you, that the
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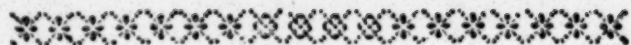
48 DISCOURSE I.

Consolations of Philosophy were yet
to be considered.

FREDERIC.

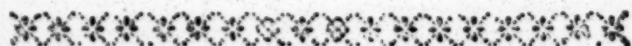
My Opinions, such as they are,
will always be at your Service; but
let us, if you please, defer the Sub-
ject till To-morrow.

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CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE II.

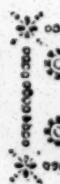


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CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

PHARAMOND.

 T is related, concerning
one of the Disciples of an
Heathen Philosopher, that
his Impatience to hear
the Lectures of his Master would
throw him into Convulsions, while

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the latter was preparing to begin :
An Eagerness of the same Kind must
be my Apology, if I have broken
in upon your Studies, or your Retirement too early.

FREDERIC.

I am never so ill disposed to receive Apologies, as when they are attended with Compliments; but both are superfluous here, so let us sit down.

PHARAMOND.

You were mortified last Night, that the Satisfaction your Arguments afforded me was not attended with something of an enthusiastic Pleasure.

DISCOURSE II. 53

sure. In respect of their Importance, you were certainly in the right: But does not that Kind of Pleasure arise chiefly from the Imagination? — Reason must lay the Grounds both of Confidence and Expectation; but it seems they must be dashed with the Colourings of the Fancy before they can *delight* or *elevate* the Heart.

F R E D E R I C.

If the Imagination is permitted only to follow the Understanding, it may produce the agreeable Effects you speak of, without, otherwise, doing Harm. Thus, when you are convinced of the universal Agency

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54 DISCOURSE II.

and paternal Care of Providence, to contemplate him through the Aid of Imagination in all his benevolent Capacities and Operations, will, undoubtedly, add Pleasure to Confidence. You should, indeed, have had Leisure for Contemplations of this kind, before I had expected to see you so *highly* satisfied.

PHARAMOND.

An Accident has occasioned those pleasing Sensations you describe ; and if they would abide with me, or even indulge me with frequent Visits, I would freely acquit the World for all the rest of its Pleasures.

F R E-

DISCOURSE II. 55

FREDERIC.

I must know what this was.

PHARAMOND.

It is usual with me, when I go to Rest, to take up some Poet, or other Writer of Fancy, from whom I receive the last Ideas of the Day. My reason for this is, to put my Imagination in a pleasing Train; for I fancy, if it is in good Humour when I fall asleep, it will continue to employ itself agreeably the rest of the Night. — You may smile, but I assure you that this is often the Effect.

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F R E -

56 DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC.

I hope you verily believe it.

PHARAMOND.

Most seriously.

FREDERIC.

I am glad of it. But upon what Author, pray, did you sleep last Night?

PHARAMOND.

The Book I chanced to take up was the *Metamorphoses* of OVID. The Passage I read was the Description of JUPITER visiting and repairing the Earth after the Conflagration of PHAETON; and after several Times repeating these inimitable Lines,

— *Terras,*

DISCOURSE II. 57

—— *Terras, Hominumque Labores*
Perspicit ——

—— *Fontesque, & nondum audentia*
labi

Flumina restituit : Dat Terræ Gra-
mina, Frondes

Arboribus, Læsasque jubet revirescere
Sylvas :

I closed my Eyes, and immediately fell asleep. The paternal Character of Providence, which your Conversation had so strongly impressed upon my Mind, added to the Poet's beautiful Idea of his repairing the Ruins of Nature, produced an extraordinary Dream, which I remember very distinctly, and will
repeat

58 DISCOURSE II.

repeat as concisely as I can. I imagined myself in the midst of a spacious Plain, in which all the human Inhabitants of the Earth were assembled. Their Business was to petition the Creator of the Universe that the Sun might be put under a better Regulation. Some complained of its too near Approaches, others of its too great Distance; some were dissatisfied at their little Portion of Day, others intreated for longer Intervals of Night. At length it was agreed to petition, that every Quarter of the Earth should have an equal Proportion of Day and Night, and enjoy the same Degree of Light and Heat. While

I was

DISCOURSE II. 59

I was trembling for the Event,
and even wishing myself of any
other Species than that of Men,
my Fears were removed by a Voice
which spoke, with inexpressible Be-
nignity, to this Effect: " My Chil-
" dren of the Earth, I forgive
" these Instances of vain and igno-
" rant Presumption, because I have
" allotted you but a small Portion
" of Knowledge. That Portion,
" however, is sufficient for your
" Happiness, if you employ it to
" the Purposes for which I gave it.
" I allowed you a Capacity to learn
" the Properties of natural Pro-
" ductions, because I intended them
" to relieve you in natural Evils.
" I suf-

60 DISCOURSE II.

“ I suffered your Knowledge to
“ reach even so far as the Motion
“ of what you call the Heavenly
“ Bodies, that you might pass with
“ more Security from one Region
“ to another, connect yourselves
“ more generally with your fellow
“ Creatures, and enjoy the various
“ Productions of Art and Nature,
“ that the different Parts of your
“ Planet would afford. I gave
“ you the Power, in many In-
“ stances, of foreseeing the Effect
“ in the Cause, that you might
“ attend to the moral Consequences
“ of your Actions, and be virtuous
“ for the sake of your own Hap-
“ piness — But the Knowledge that
“ would

DISCOURSE II. 61

“ would be of no use to you,
“ I have not allowed you; be-
“ cause it would withdraw your
“ Attention from those Objects that
“ require it. Cease to censure what
“ you can never know. The Plan
“ of my Providence is settled from
“ Eternity. To communicate as
“ much Happiness to my Creatures,
“ as their Station in the Order of
“ Beings is capable of, was my ever-
“ lasting Purpose, and to indulge
“ your vain Request were now to
“ break it. Go, then, my Children,
“ and *learn, in whatsoever State you*
“ *are, therewith to be content.* My
“ providential Care will always fol-
“ low you, and refuse you such
“ destruc-

62 DISCOURSE II.

“destructive Things as your Igno-
 “rance may desire. Let not the
 “little Knowledge I have given you
 “make you ungrateful — Creatures
 “that have less than you, have
 “not learnt to be so.” Judge, my
 dear Friend, of the Impression this
 Speech left upon me. Even after
 I awaked, I felt it at my Soul. My
 Heart laboured under the Consci-
 ousness of the paternal Love of
 God, and I never knew any Sen-
 sation resembling it but one, which
 was when I accidentally overheard
 my Father praying for me.

F R E-

DISCOURSE II. 63

FREDERIC.

I am greatly delighted with the Effects of your Dream. It reminds me of a beautiful Passage in the Speech of ELIHU to JOB, of which, too, it is a strong Illustration. If you take down that Bible, you may find it in the thirty-third Chapter.

PHARAMOND.

You mean this. “Why dost
“thou strive against Him, for He
“giveth not Account of any of his
“Matters?”

FRE-

64 DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC.

That, too, is well illustrated by
your Dream ; but proceed.

PHARAMOND.

“For God speaketh once, yea
“twice; yet Man perceiveth it
“not; in a Dream, in a Vision
“of the Night, when deep Sleep
“falleth upon Men, in Slumber-
“ings upon the Bed. Then He
“openeth the Ears of Men, and
“sealeth their Instruction.”

FREDERIC.

You see there is a good deal
of Poetry in that Passage, particu-
larly

DISCOURSE II. 65

larly in the Expression of opening the Ears of Men, in that passive State, and sealing them with Instruction; yet that is no Reason why there should not likewise be much Truth in it. For my own Part, I give it the utmost Credit, and look upon it to be perfectly agreeable to the benevolent Agency of Providence. — But I think the Verse that follows what you have read is still more to the Purpose of your Dream.

PHARAMOND.

“That he may withdraw Man
“from his Purpose, and hide Pride
“from Man.”

F

F R E-

66 DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC.

That comes home to the Business of your ideal Assembly, whose Self-Opinion, it seems, would have led them to Destruction; and, indeed, it is of the greatest moral Consequence to Man, that he should be made to feel his Dependency on Providence, and lose Sight of his natural Pride; as well as that it must frequently be both for his Happiness and Safety, to be withdrawn from his Purpose by that invisible Hand, which destroys, out of Kindness, our most flattering Schemes.

PHIL

DISCOURSE II. 67

PHARAMOND.

I thank you for these Observations, which once more call to mind our Yesterday's Conversation. Shall we resume that Part of the Subject which was left unconsidered? Are you now inclined to inform me what CONSOLATIONS may arise from PHILOSOPHY?

FREDERIC.

In the first Place, it will be necessary for us to consider what is Philosophy; for the Term has been no less misapplied than that of Religion itself; and the latter, in Proportion to its Importance, has not

F 2 suffered

68 DISCOURSE II.

suffered more from Fanaticism, than the former from Sophistry. The one has been no less injuriously represented than the other. There has always been a Kind of moral Empirics, who affected the Name and the Profession of Philosophy, and prescribed for the Mind as their physical Brethren do for the Body; that is, by removing one Disorder they brought on another. It was their Passion for a System, or the Affectation of acting from a peculiar Principle, that so generally misled them. Not considering, that Minds, like Bodies, are of different Constitutions; that the Modes of their Diseases are consequently different,

DISCOURSE II. 69

ferent, and not to be treated in the same Way, they had a *Nostrum* for all, and being generally applied, it was generally pernicious. If the Disease were removed, it was still followed by a worse. The Obduracy of the Stoic destroyed the Virtues that depend on Sensibility: the Contemptuousness of the Cynic cut him off from the Affections of Society: the Epicurean's Avidity of Pleasure made him the more a Prey to Pain; and the Philosophy of the other Sects, if not so pernicious, was still more useless. You must understand, however, that I except SOCRATES, on Account of his Doctrine of future Rewards and Punishments. From

70 DISCOURSE II.

none of these Sects, then, nor from their Systems, can we derive any rational or lasting Consolation for the Purposes of Life. The Stoic, indeed, bids the fairest for serving us, if we follow him only through a Part of his Opinions.

PHARAMOND.

You have shewn but little Reverence for the Beards of ancient Greece, and that, you know, as a Lover of Antiquity, to me must be somewhat mortifying. I am pleased, however, to find, that you have some Indulgence for the Stoic, and shall be glad to know what Part of his Doctrine you approve.

FRE-

DISCOURSE II. 71

FREDERIC.

His firm Belief of a particular Providence is certainly the best and most useful Part of his Doctrine; but that is an Article of Religion. What may principally be of use to us in his Philosophy, is the Regulation of the Mind, and of our Desires and Aversions: For PHILOSOPHY CONSISTS IN FORMING A RIGHT ESTIMATE OF THINGS, AND IN REGULATING OUR CONDUCT AGREEABLY TO THAT ESTIMATE. It is Rectitude of Sentiment and Resolution of Soul. I cannot give you a better or a nobler Idea of it, than in the Words of VALERIUS MAXIMUS — *Est et illa vehe-*

F 4

mens

72 DISCOURSE II.

mens & constans Animi Militia, Literis pollens venerabilium Doctrinæ Sacrorum Antistes Philosophia; quæ ubi Pectore recepta est Hominum, inhonesto atque inutili Affectu dispulso, totos in solido Virtutis Munimento confirmat, potentiores Metu ac Dolore faciens.

PHARAMOND.

S That is, indeed, the fullest and the noblest Idea of Philosophy, I have ever met with. I beg you will repeat it, and in *English*, if you please.

FREDERIC.

“ That Warfare of the Soul which is carried on with such Vigour and Firm-

DISCOURSE II. 73

Firmness, is under the Conduct of Philosophy, who is at once the Votary and the Priestess of Science. The Breast where she presides is divested of every base and useless Passion, and secured in the solid Armour of Virtue from the impotent Attacks of Fear and Pain."

PHARAMOND.

Upon what Occasion does the Essayist throw out this spirited and beautiful Passage? If I remember right, he does not treat particularly of Philosophy in any Part of his Works.

F R E-

FREDERIC.

It is in his Treatise *De Patientia*, or Fortitude in Suffering, after having instanced a noble Youth of *Macedon*, who, when he held up the Censer, while ALEXANDER sacrificed, suffered his Arm to be almost consumed by a burning Coal which fell upon it, that he might not, by withdrawing it, disturb the Process of the Rites. He speaks of that Incident, with the utmost Credit; and adds, that if DARIUS had been present at the Scene, he might have been convinced, that an Army composed of a Race of Men, whose tender Years were capable
of

DISCOURSE II. 75

of such Fortitude, was not to be conquered.

PHARAMOND.

The Instance is certainly very extraordinary ; and if Philosophy be capable of training Men to such a Degree of Resolution, the Attacks of Fear and Pain would, as the Author says, be very impotent indeed. However, I am not quite so credulous as the old Roman.

FREDERIC.

I see no Reason why you should disbelieve the Fact : But, be the Circumstance in Question true or false, I think there is no doubt
that

74 DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC.

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DISCOURSE II. 75

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FREDERIC.

I see no Reason why you should disbelieve the Fact : But, be the Circumstance in Question true or false, I think there is no doubt
that

76 DISCOURSE II.

that he assigns the proper Causes by which Philosophy becomes capable of such Effects.

PHARAMOND.

To point out those Causes must be of Consequence to our present Enquiry.

FREDERIC.

That was my Intention; and for the same Purpose I introduced the collective View of Philosophy we have just mentioned. In that View you are presented with

I. Her Endowments; *Literis pol-
lens*; excellent in Knowledge.

II. Her

DISCOURSE II. 77

II. Her Office ; *venerabilium Doctrinæ Sacrorum Antistes*. The Priestests of Learning, presiding over and directing its Influence and Use.

III. Her Operation on the Mind ; *Quæ ubi Pectore recepta est Hominum, inhonesto atque inutili Affectu dispulso, totos in solido Virtutis Munimento confirmat*. Dispossessing it of every base and unprofitable Attachment, and securing it in the solid Armour of Virtue.

IV. The Effects of her Operations. *Potentiores Metu ac Dolo*

78 DISCOURSE II.

lore faciens. Making us superior to Fear and Pain.

Is this View of Philosophy sufficiently distinct, or shall I exhibit it more minutely ?

PHARAMOND.

I am satisfied with the Manner in which the several Points are laid down ; but I would have them respectively illustrated and explained.

FREDERIC.

I. The first Object, then, is the Endowments of Philosophy — She must be excellent in Knowledge. As her Purpose is to form a right Estimate

DISCOURSE II. 79

Estimate of Things, it is necessary that she should be acquainted with their Nature and Properties. To know the Qualities, the Capacity, the Propensities of human Kind, she must have studied their History from the earliest Accounts of Time. We arrive at every Truth most successfully by Comparison; and it is from a comparative View of Men under the Influence of different Governments, Religions, and Educations, that Philosophy must acquaint herself with the Properties of human Nature. But her Study must not be confined to the Knowledge of Man only: So far as Science or Experience may direct her,

80 DISCOURSE II.

her, she is to enquire into every thing that relates to his Existence. The several Elements, the several Creatures, all Animal, all Vegetable Being, in which human Life has any Interest or Concern, should be the Objects of her Study. There is a nearer Connection between moral and natural Philosophy than is generally imagined. The Œconomy of the Mind alone is the Province of the former ; but while the Mind has such an Intimacy with the Body, the Knowledge of what nearly concerns the latter, cannot be unessential to its Quiet.

PHA-

DISCOURSE I. 81

PHARAMOND.

I am sorry to interrupt you — But your moral Philosopher, who is, by virtue of his own Doctrine, superior to Pain — What has he to do with the Aids of Natural Philosophy? What Occasion for the Physic of the Field to him, who precludes every Evil by the Physic of the Mind?

FREDERIC.

I shall always be glad to attend to your Objections; but here you take an unfair Advantage, by dismembring the Argument before all its Limbs are put together. — A little Patience, and if you do not

G

find

82 DISCOURSE II.

find your Objection removed as I proceed, I will answer it more particularly whenever you shall renew it.

PHARAMOND.

Excuse me, Sir! I attend to you.

FREDERIC.

The Learning of Philosophy I suppose to imply the greatest Acquisition, as well of natural, as of moral Knowledge; because I look upon her Province to comprehend the Study and Cultivation of every thing that is advantageous to human Life. How much the Knowledge of Nature in
general

DISCOURSE II. 83

general contributes to the Improvement of the intellectual Faculties, and the Enlargement of the Mind, may be gathered from the united Sentiments of all the wisest Men that have written on the Subject. At the same Time that the Ideas are extended by this Study, they are exalted too. The Mind acquires a Dignity, in Proportion to the Treasures that it lays up: Like the Body, it gets Health, and Strength, and Riches by Labour. There is an intellectual Independency which has its Charms; a conscious Security in our own Stock of Knowledge; when we are not obliged to borrow for the Purposes of Life.

84 DISCOURSE II.

PHARAMOND.

All this is excellent in Theory ;
but if Philosophy requires such Ac-
quisitions as you speak of, I appre-
hend that the Number of Philoso-
phers must be very small indeed.

FREDERIC.

Thus far, notwithstanding, would
I extend the Aim of Philosophical
Learning. A Philosopher should be
a kind of earthly Deity, and possess
the glorious Attribute of being,
humanly speaking, sufficient unto
himself.

PHA-

DISCOURSE II. 85

PHARAMOND.

This is changing Doubt for Despair.

FREDERIC.

Despair of nothing: That is one of the first Maxims of moral Improvement; and in all Cases of intellectual Proficiency, it should be followed without Exception. The Powers of the Mind are more extensive, and it is capable of much greater Attainments than is generally imagined. You observe, that the Perfection of Philosophy implies, in the first Place, the most improved State of the mental Faculties — It is the most *perfect* Idea of

86 DISCOURSE II.

Philosophy I would exhibit to you. With Regard to all Objects of virtuous Emulation, it is a Rule, both in Ethics and Religion, to place the highest Excellence in View; the Reason of which, no doubt, is, that the improveable Faculties may be exerted to the utmost — But though we should fall greatly short of the Perfection which we carry in our Ideas, that should be no necessary Cause for Despair. It is a Precept in Religion, that we should be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect; we know this to be impossible, yet there is no Impropriety in the Exhortation; the divine Model is placed before us, and we
are

DISCOURSE II. 87

are to resemble it as nearly as we can.

PHARAMOND.

I enter into your Reasons with some Degree of Satisfaction; yet still I wish you would not carry your Idea of Philosophy so high — I may behold her fair Beauty, but, indeed, I despair of visiting her Temple, or of being numbered amongst her Votaries.

FREDERIC.

Once more you have broken the Maxim I this Moment mentioned. However, I will say no more concerning the Attainments of Philosophy.

88 DISCOURSE II.

sophy. The greater they are, the more powerful, the more useful she will prove. Let us now think a little of her Office.

II. She is stiled the Priestess of Learning, presiding over and directing its Influence and Use.

PHARAMOND.

I expect much Instruction from this Part of your Observations. There is certainly more Art required in the Application of Knowledge than in the Acquisition of it.

FREDERIC.

You are undoubtedly in the right; and it is the true Application

DISCOURSE II. 89

cation of it that constitutes the very Essence of Philosophy. To study the Properties of Nature, and the Laws of her visible Œconomy makes the Man of Science; to revolve the Annals of human Kind, and to search into the Origin and Progress of the various Societies of Men may form the Historian, the Legislator, the Politician; but it is a peculiar Application only of these, and the other Branches of Knowledge, that constitutes the Philosopher. The Man of Science, by acquainting himself with the Works of Nature, and the Principles of her Œconomy, becomes rich in Speculation. His Head is full of Theory,

90 DISCOURSE II.

Theory, and Proceffes, and Systems. But there he stops: His Learning is no further of Use to him, than as it serves to amuse his Hours by contemplative Exercifes. He is still but a Man of Science; he is not a Philosopher—No, PHARAMOND! Philosophy has a different Use to make of the valuable Knowledge which is to be acquired from the Book of Nature. It teaches us to cultivate it for the Purposes of Life—To apply it to the End and Condition of our Existence. A Philosopher, when he beholds God in the rest of the Creation, beholds Him likewise in himself. The Eyes of a Fool are in the
Ends

DISCOURSE II. 91

Ends of the Earth, and they continue there. The Eyes of a Philosopher are in the Ends of the Earth, and they return to him laden with Wisdom and Instruction. The Fool may behold as much of Nature, his Curiosity may be as strong, his Search as industrious; but still he is at a Distance from himself. Like that Truant Species of the Bee, which passes from Flower to Flower without the Care of making Honey, he derives no Advantage from the Variety or the Extent of his Enquiries; and like that, too, when the Winter of Adversity approaches, he has no Repository where he may find Relief.

92 DISCOURSE II.

Relief. With the Philosopher every thing is otherwise. What he touches, he turns to Gold. The Knowledge of Nature, in particular, is of the greatest Service to him. When he beholds the Principles of her Œconomy, he accommodates himself to them, and makes them the Rule of his Life—He sees, for Instance, that she delights in Simplicity, and that all her Works, however artificially constructed, are supported by the simplest Means. He follows religiously the Suggestions that arise from her, and sustains himself by plain and unmodified Aliments. Hence his Body is free from those morbid Humours that
arise

DISCOURSE II. 93

arise from the Compounds of alien Food, and the Ferment of contending Qualities.—It was a simple but a valuable Privilege which the Flocks of TITYRUS enjoyed; I mean that of feeding in the same Pasture—*Non insueta tentabunt Pabula*, cried the envying Exile—Your Sheep will not be tainted by a Variety of Pasturage—Thus, if we may compare small Things with great, it fares with the Philosopher. He lives in a simple and uniform Manner; and avoids a Variety of Aliments that his Juices may be preserved pure. While the Body is kept in due Order, the Task of the Mind is much easier. True
Wisdom

94 DISCOURSE II.

Wisdom directs itself to every End by the easiest Means. Though by many moral and intellectual Aids the Philosopher may render himself superior both to moral and natural Evil, yet, against the latter, he will always seek natural Aids and Antidotes. In Religion it is a Rule that a Man should not tempt God; it ought to be a Rule in Philosophy that he should not tempt Nature. The former, uncorrupted by Faticism, teaches us to make use of those obvious Means of Grace which have *appeared to all Men*, without looking for supernatural Aids or extraordinary Illuminations; the latter, unperturbed by Sophistry, instructs

DISCOURSE I. 95

fructs us to draw from Nature such Reliefs and Antidotes as Experience and Investigation have made known to Men, without the moral knight Errantry of combating every thing by mental Fortitude.

PHARAMOND.

I thank you particularly for these Observations, as I perceive you meant them for an Answer to my Objections. You will pardon me for interrupting you once more; I could not forbear to express the Satisfaction you have given me.

F R E-

96 DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC.

If I have removed your Objections, I have acquitted myself of my Promise, and my Task is easier—The Mind of Man, I was about to observe, in its improved State of Philosophy, might be compared to a fortified Town, the Inhabitants of which should not depend exclusively either on the Plenty of their Stores within, or on the Strength of their Works without. One of these Aids without the other would always be ineffectual. In like Manner it is the Property of true Wisdom to unite the external Succours of Nature, with the inward Supports of Reason, and to
make

DISCOURSE II. 97

make them auxiliary to each other. To discover those Succours and to know those Supports is the End of Study and of Science; to apply them properly is the Use of them. —

PHARAMOND.

Though the Morning wastes, you will not let the Conversation drop here — The Subject is too interesting. What can be more pregnant with the Consolations of human Life, than the Application of Learning under the Direction of Philosophy?

H

F R E -

98 DISCOURSE II.

FREDERIC.

I paused to relieve you; if you are not weary, then, I will proceed.—With regard to what may be called the higher Parts of Science, Geometry, Astronomy, &c. the Advantage which Philosophy may derive from these for the Consolations of Life, consists principally in the Enlargement and Extension of our Ideas. From hence we are enabled to form a distinct and comparative View of our own Allotment in the System of the Universe. Our private Importance lessens in our Eyes, in Proportion as they are attracted by the Superiority of other Beings, the Multitude

DISCOURSE II. 99

tude of other Worlds, and the Im-
menfity of the Creation. Self-Anxi-
ety leffens in Proportion as Self-
Importance decreafes. — The Con-
templation of great Objects makes
us inattentive to fmall ones, and to
be deeply interefted about them feems
ridiculous. — I once vifited a learn-
ed Friend, and found him pensive
in his Study, with FONTENELLE'S
Plurality of Worlds, and a Sheet of
Paper, full of Blots and Figures,
lying before him. “I have been
“ seeking Amufement, faid he, and
“ I have met with Melancholy. I
“ fate down to calculate the Num-
“ ber of rational Beings that might
“ be contained in the whole Planet-

ECO DISCOURSE II.

“ any System, supposing that each
“ Planet might be inhabited in Pro-
“ portion to this our Earth. In
“ the midst of my Calculations, the
“ Moths fell so fast from my Can-
“ dle, that they almost covered my
“ Paper. This Circumstance struck
“ me with disagreeable Reflections —
“ I considered, that while I was
“ numbering one Species of Be-
“ ings, I was destroying another ;
“ and the uncertain Tenure of Ex-
“ istence in general, was a Subject
“ that occasioned less pleasing Spe-
“ culations.”

This learned Man, you see, brought
his Philosophy into Use. He re-
duced

DISCOURSE II. 101

duced it to Practice, and applied it to the Circumstances of his own Being.

PHARAMOND.

Yet I do not perceive what Advantage he derived from it.

FREDERIC.

You find it was a Disadvantage. And at the same time you will observe, how easily Philosophical Reflections may be misapplied. That uncertain Tenure of Life, which is equally the Lot of all Animal Existence, instead of exciting melancholy Ideas, should have produced the Sentiments of Reconcili-

H 3

ation

102 DISCOURSE II.

ation and Acquiescence. When the Philosopher beheld the Moths fallen dead upon his Paper, it might very naturally have occurred to him, that it is more than probable a Species of Beings may exist, in whose Estimation the Fall of Men must seem of as little Consequence, as the Fall of Moths is to Men. As every thing appears great or little by Comparison, he might thus have found the Insignificancy of his own Being, and learned to be less solicitous about its End. It is by looking down the Scale of Being that we acquire Importance; and in Consequence of that we lay up Discontent. Look upward, and we lessen

DISCOURSE II. 103

lessen unavoidably, even in our own Opinion.

PHARAMOND.

But will this contribute at all to our Happiness? I have been told, and, I think, by Philosophers too, that it in some Measure depends on a *good* Opinion of ourselves.

FREDERIC.

Literally, you are in the right. It is a *great* Opinion of ourselves, of our Existence and Mode of Being in general, from which it is the Business of Philosophy to wean us. When by a rational Survey

H 4

of

104 DISCOURSE II.

of our own State we find our comparative Weakness and Insignificancy, our Opinions are necessarily reduced to the Level of our Condition. Hence all those Swellings of Mind which are the Excrescences of Vanity subside and fall away, and we obtain at the same time a happy Exemption from the many idle Pains that attend them.

PHARAMOND.

That would, indeed, be a very glorious Effect of Philosophy:—
How much to be envied!

FRE-

DISCOURSE II. 105

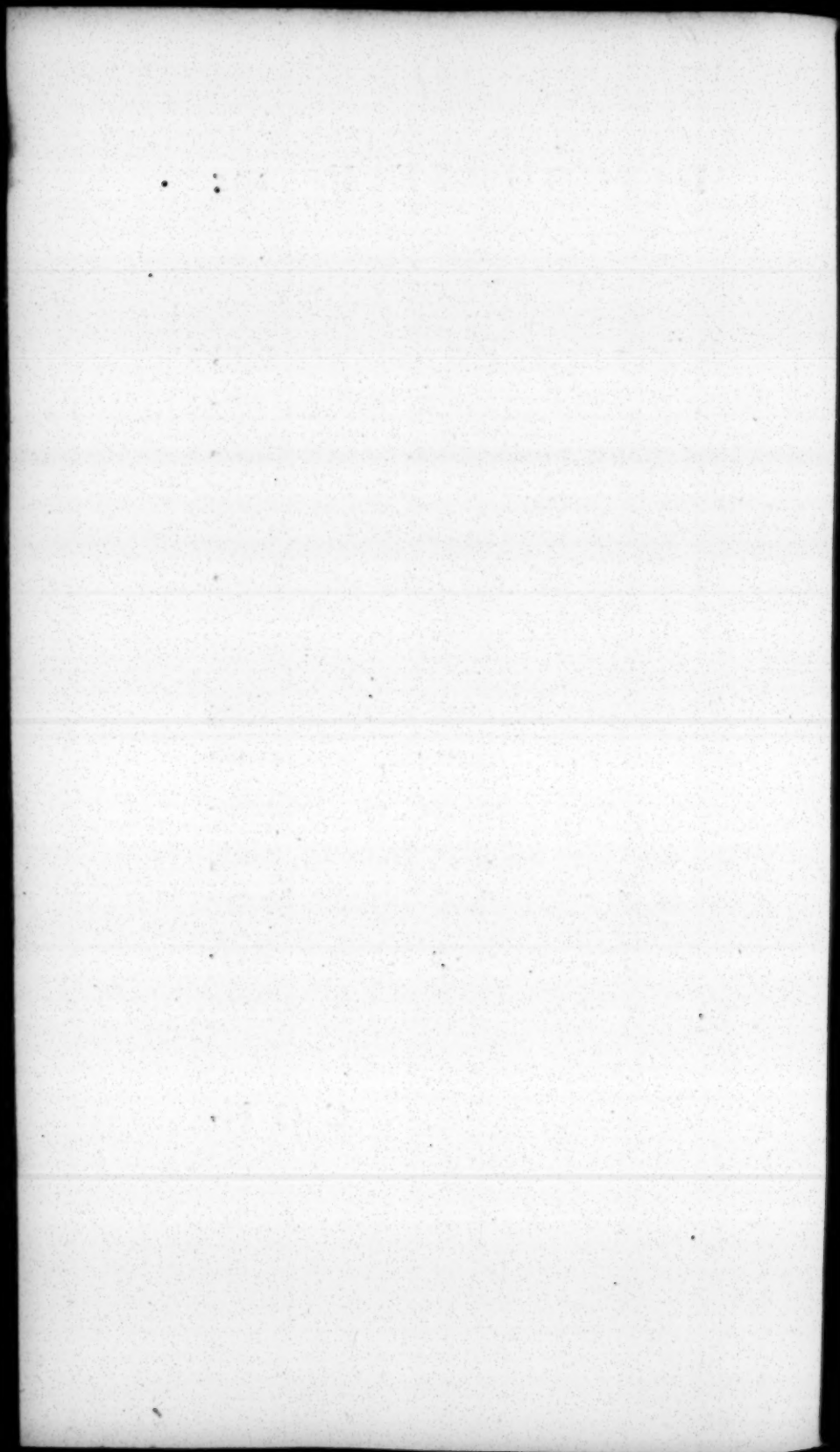
FREDERIC.

Believe me, PHARAMOND, there is nothing more natural, nothing more practicable. The Principle is allowed:

*Sincerum est nisi Vas, quodcunque
infundis acescit.*

Here, you see, we arrive at that Limit of our Discourse, where we placed the Operation of Philosophy on the Mind. But of this, I suppose, we shall speak better if we allow ourselves a little Respite.

C O N-





CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE III.





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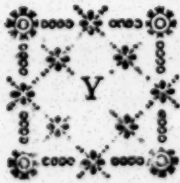


CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE III.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

FREDERIC.



YOU are one of the few
Persons, PHARAMOND,
whom I am neither afraid
nor unwilling to trust with
my Sentiments. You have taught
me a Kind of Confidence and a
Readi-

110 DISCOURSE III.

Readiness of Communication, which are not natural to me. At least I have met with few Persons, whom either Pride or Prudence, or possibly something between both, have not restrained me from engaging in such Conversations as these.

PHARAMOND.

Your Charity, Sir! Your Humanity—

FREDERIC.

No—A Mind so well furnished as yours is not the Object of either—We have a Pleasure in communicating our Sentiments, where we think they will be sensibly and
inge-

DISCOURSE III. 111

ingenuously received. When a Traveller is overtaken by the Evening, if he discovers a Light in some neighbouring Cottage, it is natural for him to rejoice. But his whole Pleasure does not, I presume, arise from his Expectations of Hospitality and Security. He hopes to meet with some kind Ear to which he may impart the Circumstances of the Day, describe the Ways he passed through, and more particularly the Observations that occurred to him as he proceeded. Such is the Satisfaction I have in conversing with you—In passing through Life I have made some cursory Remarks, which I am
vain

112 DISCOURSE III.

vain enough to find a Pleasure in communicating, though, perhaps, they may be useless to every other Traveller.

PHARAMOND.

Be assured there is one Person for whom I have so much Regard that I will not suffer him either to forget, or to misapply them. I flatter myself, at least, that no material Circumstance of our late Conversations will ever escape me. And I am now able to remind you of what you possibly have forgot, that you proceeded no farther in your Account of Philosophy, and the Consolations that may
be

DISCOURSE III. 113

be derived from her, than those Arguments that had Respect to her Learning, and her Application of that Learning. Her Operations on the Mind were what you next proposed to consider.

FREDERIC.

III. These the *Roman* Essayist calls, "The dispossessing it of every
"base and unprofitable Attachment,
"and securing it within the strong
"Fortifications of Virtue." There is the closest Analogy imaginable between the Operations of the natural and the moral World in general; but this appears in nothing more clearly, than in their renovating.

I and

and correcting Principles. — When Nature falls into a depraved or vitiated Habit, her first Efforts are to disengage herself from the Causes that brought it upon her. In the first Stages of her Distemper, she will generally, if left to herself, effect her own Cure; in the last, she as frequently requires external Aids: And, as if she had been conscious of the Wants and Infirmities that might befall her, those Aids she has provided us in her own Productions. The same Conduct is observable in the Œconomy of the Mind. It has a peculiar intrinsic Power, which resists and throws off the first Impressions of Vice; and which,

DISCOURSE III. 115

which, for a while, is sufficient to restore it to its native Freedom and Purity. It opposes the Beginnings of Error, too, in the same Manner, and, during their first Advances, will often fall back to the natural Principles of Truth. But when Error and Depravity have established themselves by Habit, then it is that the moral, like the material Nature, requires external Assistance. This Assistance is to be sought in Philosophy, or the Cultivation of Reason; which, by exalting the Mind, dispossesses it of such Attachments as are base and unworthy of it, by enlightening it, of such as are vain and unprofitable. In this we may

116 DISCOURSE III.

behold one of the most important Uses of Learning, that Men of cultivated Minds, if they deviate into Vice or Error, are more easily reclaimed than others. They have acquired a Dignity, a Delicacy of Sentiment, which continually opposes the Pursuit of low and unworthy Objects; or, if they are already engaged in it, disquiets them in the Progress.

PHARAMOND.

How happy, my dear Sir, are such Effects as these! Surely the Cultivation of the Mind, the Acquisition of Knowledge, are superior

DISCOURSE III. 117

rior to every other possible Advantage.

F R E D E R I C .

Their Use and Excellence are by no means comparative ; there is nothing that can, with any Propriety, be placed in Competition with them. Let us recollect, however, that we are here speaking of one particular good Effect of Philosophy, that Operation on the Mind which removes its vain and idle Attachments.—Your Favourite Poet will help us forward here :

I 3

Felix,

118 DISCOURSE III.

*Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere
causas;*

*Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile
Fatum*

*Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Ache-
rontis avari.*

The first Step, you see, is to become acquainted with the original Frame and Constitution of Nature; the Plan, as far it may be traced, and the established Laws of her Œconomy; her general Design, and her particular Purposes; the Value she apparently sets on every Species of Being, from the Duration she allows it, or the Care she takes in its Preservation. — By thus studying
ing

DISCOURSE III. 119

ing and attending to the original Design, and the particular Œconomy of Nature, we shall learn, by Degrees, to make our Estimates agreeable to them. We shall put ourselves in her Place, make her Laws our Laws, and set the same Value on every Part of her Works that she herself seems to have set upon them. — Let us stop here, and see how many idle Prejudices, how many senseless Fears, how many vain Prepossessions, how many ridiculous Sorrows will at once fall to the Ground!

PHARAMOND.

I see, I feel it.

I 4

F R E-

120 DISCOURSE III.

FREDERIC.

Continue in this Position ; keep your Eye fixed here. We are now looking down upon the Creation. You see that innumerable Multitude of Worlds —

PHARAMOND.

Astonishing!—Magnificent beyond Expression !

FREDERIC.

Yet these are, comparatively, nothing, the Production of a single Idea —

PHA-

DISCOURSE III. 121

PHARAMOND.

Great God! Whither are you
leading my trembling Imagination?
—I dare not follow you farther—
I fear—

FREDERIC.

Come on; we shall find our
Advantage in it—The Heights of
Philosophy are arduous, indeed; but
when once we have reached them,
we breathe a very salutary Air—
Yes, PHARAMOND, we will con-
clude, that this Multitude of Worlds
was arranged by one single Idea
of that universal Spirit and Intel-
ligence which animated and disposed
the Portions of Matter.—But can
you

122 DISCOURSE III.

you suppose that you behold in this System the Limits of Creation? As well might a Peasant, who inhabits the Valley of the *Grisons*, conclude, when he ascends Mount *Cenis*, that the whole World is under his Eye. That ever active and creative Intelligence must have exerted itself in the Formation of Systems innumerable, incomprehensible; in Comparison of which this that we inhabit, is probably no more than the Dust of the Balance.— Perhaps, even now, the Business of Creation is following the leading Hand of its intelligent and spiritual Principle, and while we are dis-

DISCOURSE III. 123

discourfing on fome Parts of Ex-
iftence, others are fpringing forth.

PHARAMOND.

I am loft, my Friend; my Ima-
gination is overwhelmed and funk
under the Magnificence of the Ideas
you have excited. — Good Heaven!
How little, how insignificant do I
find myfelf!

FREDERIC.

That is a Point gained — but
gained, perhaps, too foon. The
Sense you at prefent entertain of
the comparative Unimportance of
Man was excited by carrying our
Ideas upwards; let us fee whether
it

124 DISCOURSE III.

it may not be confirmed by bringing them downwards.

PHARAMOND.

I attend to you—but I do not apprehend the Argument you have in View.

FREDERIC.

It has been observed, that we ought to form our Estimates of Things in Proportion to the Value which Nature seems to have set upon them.

PHARAMOND.

You have observed this.

FRE-

DISCOURSE III. 125

FREDERIC.

And that the Degree of Importance, they appear to have with her, may be learnt from the Duration she has allowed them, and from the Care she has taken for their Preservation.

PHARAMOND.

This seems reasonable ; yet I am in some Pain about the Inferences to which you are making your Way—I do not like this Socratic Method of Argument—It brings one aground, without the Possibility of getting off.

FRE-

426 DISCOURSE III.

FREDERIC.

Surely, you need be in no Pain about those Conclusions to which Reason leads you—Let us follow her coolly, and she will direct us safely.

PHARAMOND.

Excuse me; you know I am naturally diffident, and timorous—in Points of great Importance afraid, both of making Concessions and of drawing Conclusions.

FREDERIC.

I know of no worse Cowardice than that of not daring to think—

DISCOURSE III. 127

think—Come, let us go forward; we have but little Light, 'tis true; but still it is sufficient to distinguish the Objects as we pass—Upon our general Principle, that the most rational Estimate of every Being is to be drawn from the Duration assigned to it, and from the Care that Nature has taken for its Preservation, what are we to think of Man?

PHARAMOND.

I am afraid to think at all. —

FREDERIC.

You must be cured of this Malady—It seems that Profligates assumed

128 DISCOURSE III.

fumed the glorious Title of Free Thinkers, because honest Men had not Courage enough to assert their Right to it.

PHARAMOND.

It may be so : But I must leave you the Honour of recovering the lost Standards. I shall freely own to you, however, that if we are to judge of the Importance of Man, in this System, from the Care that Nature has taken for his Preservation, it will, in my Opinion, be found very inconsiderable — For where is there so defenceless a Creature ? Where is there a Being over whom

DISCOURSE III. 129

whom Death has so many Advantages?

FREDERIC.

Some of those Advantages Nature has allowed, and we have contributed many more—You should consider, however, that though human Beings may be liable to more than their Proportion of natural Infirmities, though their Bodies are not of the same robust Texture, nor armed with the same Means of Defence that other Creatures enjoy, yet these Defects are made up by a superior Portion of Reason. This taught them to seek, in an associated State, that Security, which,

K

as

130 DISCOURSE III.

as Individuals, they could not be said to possess. Man is certainly thus in a more defensible State, than he would have been, if Nature, instead of this Privilege, had given him Limbs sufficient to grapple with the Lion.

PHARAMOND.

That, in one Sense, is allowable. Yet I question, whether the Privilege you speak of has not destroyed more of the human Species, than would have fallen under the superior Strength of Savages, in a *reasonable* Contest for Mast and Acorns.

FRE-

DISCOURSE III. 131

FREDERIC.

I know not how to deny it.

PHARAMOND.

Nay, the very *Indians* of *North America* will tell you, that when you brought the Improvements of Society amongst them, you opened many Doors for Death.

FREDERIC.

Nothing more certain.

PHARAMOND.

What, then, is this boasted Privilege of Reason? — Of Reason in its most cultivated State? — I am afraid this moral Defence is but a

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forry

132 DISCOURSE III.

forry Alternative for natural Prowess, constitutional Freedom, and Firmness of Body, and the uniform Enjoyment of Health and Vigour. — This very *Reason*, which, you say, Nature has given us by Way of Armour and Security, — what has it done? It has taught us to associate, I own it, and brought Home to us those Consequences of Society we call the Improvements and Advantages of Life. — But how mistaken are we in our Terms! — These Improvements of Life are the Advantages of Death! — Who will have the Hardiness to affirm, that, in Proportion as Society has been cultivated, human Life has been lengthened,

DISCOURSE III. 133

ened, has been secured? The Luxury, the Corruption, consequent on that Cultivation, tell us a less pleasing Truth.

FREDERIC.

You are arrived at the Point in View, without giving me the Trouble of conducting you.

PHARAMOND.

What Point do you mean?

FREDERIC.

That Nature has taken but little Care for the Preservation of human Life; since Reason, the only visible Means of Defence she has

K 3

given

134 DISCOURSE III.

given us, has, in general, contributed rather to the Destruction than to the Security of our Species.

PHARAMOND.

And what would you infer from this melancholy Conclusion?

FREDERIC.

This obvious Truth, that as she has taken but little Care to preserve these Beings she has given us, they are of no great Consequence in her Estimation.

PHARAMOND.

Supposing that to be the Case, it is not easy to see what Consolation
fo

DISCOURSE III. 135

so very mortifying a Doctrine can afford.

FREDERIC.

O, the greatest imaginable!

PHARAMOND.

I am profoundly ignorant of this.

FREDERIC.

Does not our best and truest Wisdom arise from the Principles of Nature?

PHARAMOND.

Certainly — There is no other Source for it.

K 4

FRE-

136 DISCOURSE III.

FREDERIC.

Then we shall think most wisely when we hold every Object in the same Estimation that she appears to hold it.

PHARAMOND.

I understand you.—Upon this Principle it is our Wisdom to set but little Value on this Life of ours, because Nature herself seems to have set but little upon it.

FREDERIC.

That is what I would conclude.

PHA-

DISCOURSE III. 137

PHARAMOND.

Alas! my Friend, you may call it Wisdom, but the Consolation it should bring is still out of Sight.

FREDERIC.

This Kind of Wisdom renders it unnecessary — It has something more and better than Consolation to afford us — It places us above the Want of it.

PHARAMOND.

It shews us our Weakness and Insignificancy —

FRE-

138 DISCOURSE III.

FREDERIC.

And at the same Time teaches us not to be anxious about that which is not worth our Anxiety.

PHARAMOND.

This is a Doctrine which it must be very difficult to reduce to Practice.

FREDERIC.

Have you not, when a School-Boy, lamented the Fall of your Kite, when it was whirled down by some sudden and unexpected Gust of Air?

PHA-

DISCOURSE III. 139

PHARAMOND.

Nothing more likely —

FREDERIC.

And envied the Success of those
who had not met with the same
Misfortune?

PHARAMOND.

Without doubt.

FREDERIC.

Your Envy and your Grief were
both as rational as Grief and Envy
can at any Time be, when excited
by the Loss of those Objects you
have fixed your Heart upon. Your
Kite was of as much Consequence
to

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to you then, as any other Thing can be at present; and there is nothing which you now lay to Heart, that is not equally liable to disappoint you; that may not be taken from you by a Blast of Air.—Yet you smile at your boyish Sorrow, while you are ready to indulge it for Causes not in the least more reasonable.—Dear PHARAMOND, we are still Children, till Philosophy has opened the Mind, divested it of its unprofitable Attachments, and shewn it the Vanity of its idle Regrets—A Philosopher looks upon the Miseries of Men, as Men look upon the Distresses of Children—To him
their

DISCOURSE III. 141

their Causes appear equally unreasonable, and the Sorrows they raise upon them not less ridiculous.

PHARAMOND.

That exalted State of Mind, I own, is truly enviable.

FREDERIC.

To aspire to it is to obtain it. And when, on a due Estimate of Life itself, and the several Circumstances that attend it, we find nothing of a perishable Nature worth either our Sorrows or our Cares, the Mind will seek for some Object of an immortal and unchangeable Quality, whereon it may exercise

142 DISCOURSE III.

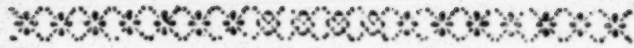
ercise its Faculties, and that Object is Virtue. When the *Roman* Writer mentions this as the solid Armour with which Philosophy invests her Votaries, I make no doubt that he means Greatness of Soul. Such was the general Idea that their Word *Virtus* conveyed, and in his progressive Account of Philosophy he naturally leads to it. "It is the Property of her Operations, says he, to wean the Soul from low Affections; and by that Means to secure it within the strong Fortifications of Virtue." — As if he had said, When the Mind is dis-attached to meaner Pursuits, it will naturally recur to such as are greater
and

DISCOURSE III. 143

and more worthy of it; it will acquire a Dignity which is the Foundation of Virtue, which, in short, is Virtue itself. Here we behold the Mind of Man in its happiest State of philosophic Excellence, aspiring to Virtue by consulting its proper Dignity. Thus far we have endeavoured to trace the Operations of Philosophy. Before we consider the Effects of those Operations, a little Respite, I believe, will be agreeable to us both.

C O N-





CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE IV.





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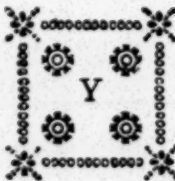


CONSOLATIONS.

DISCOURSE IV.

FREDERIC and PHARAMOND.

FREDERIC.

 YOU have observed that Travellers are more pleased with each other as they approach the End of their Journey.

L 2

PHA-

144 DISCOURSE IV.

PHARAMOND.

They are; and I suppose there is no great Difficulty in accounting for their good Humour.

FREDERIC.

No—you and I find out the Cause by Experience. Our Philosophical Expedition draws towards an End, and we now meet in better Spirits, because we have less to go through.

PHARAMOND.

I am still making the same unwary Concessions — Yet you are too hard upon me — You know I cannot bear it.

FRE-

DISCOURSE IV. 145

FREDERIC.

A very happy Effect of Philosophy that! — Let us go on, then, and enquire, what are the other good Effects of her Operations.

PHARAMOND.

Pardon me—I attend to you very seriously.

FREDERIC.

IV. To be superior to Fear and Pain, PHARAMOND! to Apprehensions for the future and Distress for the past. —

L. 3

PHA-

146 DISCOURSE IV.

PHARAMOND.

That is, indeed, a most desirable State.

FREDERIC.

And we are assured that this is in the Gift of Philosophy. Nay, if we recollect her Powers and Purposes, we shall hardly doubt of it. When she has enlarged the Mind, extended its Ideas, and taught it a rational Estimate of Life, and the Contingencies of Life; Fear, with all its troublesome Train of Anxieties, Sollicitudes, and Apprehensions, vanishes unavoidably.

PHA?

DISCOURSE IV. 147

PHARAMOND.

Yet I am doubtful —

FREDERIC.

Of what? You will not charge on the Mind of a Philosopher, a Mind that estimates every thing in Proportion to its Worth, and is regulated purely by unbiaſſed Reaſon; you will hardly charge on ſuch a Mind the Imputation of Folly.

PHARAMOND.

You cannot ſuppoſe it.

L 4

FRE-

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FREDERIC.

Then you will not think it capable of Fear: For *all Fear is Folly.*

PHARAMOND.

How! then, are there not reasonable Fears? I allow, the Expression of *groundless Fears* is common, but, at the same Time, it seems to imply the Possibility of such as are not groundless, such as have some real Cause or Foundation, and, of Consequence, are not unreasonable.

FRE-

DISCOURSE IV. 149

FREDERIC.

Current Expressions, you know, do not always carry Truth and Propriety with them. And whatever they may insinuate to the contrary, still Fear and Folly are synonymous Terms.

PHARAMOND.

You will at least have the Goodness to explain this Mystery.

FREDERIC.

The Events we fear either will come to pass, or they will not come to pass —

PHA-

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PHARAMOND.

It is easy to see what you would infer from thence. You will pardon me, but I am not to be satisfied with that trite Demonstration, which is to follow your well known Proposition. If I see any Evil impending, it must, it will excite my Fears. If it be unavoidable, so much the worse.

FREDERIC.

I am pleased to find that you are not to be carried away by the Slight of Syllogism, and that you saw through the Shadow I was holding up to you. Let us ever thus despise the Arts of Schoolmen,
and

DISCOURSE IV. 451

and collect our Opinions only from the Truth and Nature of Things— If these do not tell us that Fear is Folly, we will cease to think it so.

PHARAMOND.

With that Method of Enquiry I shall be perfectly satisfied.

FREDERIC.

We must still recur to our first Principle, and form our Estimate of Things agreeably to the Œconomy of Nature. What is the Object of our Fears? Is it Death?— Let us consider a Moment— Would you not think me a little unreasonable,

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sonable, if I expressed some great Fear that the Sun would set to Day? —

PHARAMOND.

Why should you put such a Question?

FREDERIC.

A little absurd? —

PHARAMOND.

Who could help it?

FREDERIC.

The Fear of Death is full as unreasonable, full as absurd. The Resignation of Life is as natural and

DISCOURSE IV. 153

and as necessary as the Resignation of Day-light. The People that inhabit the other Side of the Globe have the same Title to the latter that we have. The succeeding Generation has as much Right to the Places we hold on Earth, as we had to those of our Predecessors—To be afraid of Death, then, would not be foolish only; it would be unjust—One of the *Moorish* Kings of *Spain* thought very reasonably on this Subject. His Favourite, in Compliment to his Master, complained that there was such a thing as Death in the World.—“ Hold, said the Prince, let us not abuse our best Friend—
Had

154 DISCOURSE IV.

Had he not removed my Father,
I should neither have been Caliph,
nor you Prime Minister."

PHARAMOND.

All this seems very just.

FREDERIC.

You must be sensible that to fear
any other natural Event is equally
absurd.

PHARAMOND.

It cannot be denied—But are
there not moral Evils to be fear-
ed?

FRE-

DISCOURSE IV. 155

FREDERIC.

There are many which it must be reasonable to guard against; none which it can be reasonable to fear.

PHARAMOND.

That Distinction is fair and equitable; as you were determined to take away my Fears, it was but reasonable you should leave me Caution. But what shall we do with Pain?

FREDERIC.

You know we are speaking of mental Pain, the Distresses of the Mind.

PHA-

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PHARAMOND.

I know it.

FREDERIC.

The same Principle that puts an End to our Fears, excludes our Sorrows too. It is equally unreasonable either to dread or to deplore those Events which happen in Consequence of the established Order of Nature. And as Caution, with Regard to moral Evils, is the proper Substitute of Fear; so, in a wise and well disciplined Mind, Perplexity and Uneasiness will give Place to calm and unembarrassed Sentiment. — And now, PHARAMOND,

DISCOURSE IV. 157

MOND, we have pursued this Subject as far as it would lead us : It is Time we should relieve ourselves by Attentions less abstracted. What think you of Air and Exercise?

PHARAMOND.

With all my Heart—That is the Practical Philosophy of the Body, in which I never fail to find my Account.

F I N I S.

DISCOURSE IV. 157



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